THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) The proposal to refer the Babri Masjid-Ram Janma Bhoomi dispute to the Supreme Court under article 138 (2) of the Constitution is already on the "Common Minimum programme" of the Government.

(b) and (c). The proposal involves intricate legal aspects which are being analysed in detail in consultation with the Ministry of Law.

Migratory Birds

2718. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the different migratory birds coming to different bird sanctuaries during the winter season and

(b) the steps taken to provide proper protection to those migrating birds particularly to Siberian Cranes which arrived at Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) About 350 species and subspecies of birds are regular winter migrants into India, including the various bird sanctuaries. These include ducks, geese, cranes, pelicans, coromorants, shore birds, falcons, eagles, harriers, swallows, flycatchers, thrushes, pipits, wagtails, buntings, finches etc.

(b) All migratory birds are covered by the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 under which they are fully protected against hunting and commercial exploitation. In addition, much of their habitat is also protected in the network of national parks and sanctuaries throughout the country. Siberian Cranes are included in Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act and thus receive the highest degree of protection. They winter in the Keoladeo Ghana National Park in which their habitat is free from all disturbances. India is also a party to the M.O.U. for the conservation of Siberian Cranes under the International Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS). Under this M.O.U. cooperative action is being taken alongwith all the range countries of the Siberian Crane to protect the species and its habitat.

Demand for Poorvanchal Pradesh

2719. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Poorvanchal Pradesh demand gains tempo", appearing in the Hindustan Times, dated November 22, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The news item states, inter-alia, that the demand for carving out a Poorvanchal Pradesh comprising 22 densely populated but poverty-ridden districts of eastern U.P. is gathering momentum and that an organisation called 'Poorvanchal Vikas' has been floated to chart out the course of the movement in the region.

(c) The policy of the Government is to advance the principles of political, administrative and economic federalism, as a consequence of which the benefits of development are expected to percolate down much factor to the hither to underdeveloped regions of the country.

[Translation]

Illegal Beef Trade

2720. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the illegal beef trade is going on in Delhi and other places of the country;

(b) whether beef is being sold illegally in the hostels/guest houses;

(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government against owners of such hotels/guest houses in Delhi and other States and also to check the illegal beef trade;

(d) the number of persons found engaged in such illegal trade in various States during the last three years till date, and

(e) the action taken or proposed to be taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (e) The requisite information is being collected from the organisations concerned and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[English]

***Access to IB's Records**

2721. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Intellegence Bureau has denied access to their records relating to India's Freedom Struggle to the Scholars, researchers in the Indian Historical Research Commission;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and